## Calendar of Events

**A complete listing of department, committee, commission, and board meetings is posted: www.royalston-ma.gov**

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>September 30-October 7</td>
<td><strong>Banned Books Week</strong></td>
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**October 1 Sunday**
12:30 - 3 p.m. **119th South Royalston School Reunion**, open to all who ever attended elementary school in Town, at the Royalston Fish & Game Club. A short meeting at 12:30 followed by a **Harvest Turkey Dinner**. Members are contributing to a Harvest Dinner menu of dinner rolls and butter, and roast turkey with stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, squash, cranberry sauce, and desserts. Monetary donations are also being accepted to defray expenses. Contact Rose Lawrence at 978-249-6814 or Jan St. Jean at 978-928-5133 or 978-249-9656.

**October 5 Thursday**
6:30 – 8 p.m. **“Read-in”** at the Library. Stop by to read, browse, and enjoy the Freedom to Read during Banned Books Week. Refreshments.

**October 9 Monday**
**Indigenous Peoples’ Day/ Columbus Day** – Post Office, P. S. Newton Library, all schools closed; no meetings

**October 11 Wednesday**
10 to 11:30 a.m. **Seasonal Flu Vaccination Clinic** at the Town Hall, 13 On The Common.

**October 14 Saturday**
9a.m.-noon **Explorers’ Bake Sale**, featuring cookies, breads, pies, brownies and popcorn! Stop by to help support the local Timber Wolf Explorers. Proceeds to benefit Marion’s Food Pantry and troop supplies.

**October 17 Tuesday**
5 p.m. **Cultural Council Grant Application Deadline**.

**October 20 Friday**
7 p.m. **Historical Society Quarterly Meeting**, Members are urged to attend to vote on new collections policy and changes to the Society’s constitution. To see the proposed changes, please visit royalstonhistorical.org. The meeting will be held at the Chase-Gospodarek home, 13 NE Fitzwilliam Rd. 249-0358 for info.

**October 21 Saturday**
10 a.m. – 3 p.m. **Royalston Fall Fair**, sponsored by the Town Ag Committee - hay rides, farm animals, tractor display, sheep dog demonstration, vendors and music on the Common.

3 p.m. **Royalston Fire & EMS Chicken BBQ** at Station #1, just off The Common on Athol Road. Tickets are $20/adults and $12/kids under 12.

7 p.m. **Candlelit Royalston Historical Society Living History Tours** at Riverside Cemetery in South Royalston. Find out about the lives of people in South Royalston in the 19th and early 20th centuries through the life stories of the people buried in the cemetery told by costumed actors. Refreshments. Free, but donations welcomed.

**October 24 Tuesday**
**United Nations Day**

**October 26 Thursday**
6:30 p.m. **Fire Safety Education Ladies’ B. program** presented by Brenda Putney at Town Hall. All welcome.

**October 31 Tuesday**
**Halloween**
5:30 - 7 p.m. **Town Wide Trick-or-Treat and Trunk-or-Treat** on the Common for those that wish to participate instead of having trick or treaters coming to their homes. Trunk Decorations are encouraged as last year they were a huge hit for the kids.

Library is open for Trick or Treating.

**Save the Date**

**November 2 Thursday**
6:30 - 8 p.m. **Whitney Hall Marketing Feasibility Study Public Meeting Presentation and Discussion of Preliminary Findings and Recommendations** to be held upstairs in Town Hall.

**November 5 Sunday**
2 p.m. **Library Craft program** for teens and adults at Town Hall. Decorate a festive wooden sign. Limited to the first 20 people to register by calling the Library at 978-249-3572. Free. Sponsored by the Friends.
Select Board Notes
Shelby Bronnes, Clerk
This month a legislative hearing on the Municipal and Public Safety Building Authority bill was held at the State House. This bill (S.1489/H.3802), filed by Senator Joanne Comerford, would provide a critically-needed, stable source of state funding to municipalities for improvements and construction of local public safety and municipal buildings. Royalston was personally invited on the panel to share our story to representatives of the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security. On Wednesday, September 13, Select Board Chair Deb D’Amico went to speak on behalf of our town. She specifically spoke about our need for adequate municipal office space and our efforts to convert the Raymond School into office space. As we all know, the lack of funding available to small towns, like Royalston, to bring such a project to completion, affects small towns all over the state. We hope that our story will support the passage of this bill.

The disposition of the historic Old Fire Station on The Common has been the topic of discussion at several Select Board meetings. Despite some rumors we’ve heard, the Board is not planning to tear the building down. Instead, the Board is exploring the possibility of transferring ownership of this building to another entity that could preserve and maintain it. As of this writing, the Royalston Historical Society has expressed a possible interest in the building. We will be working with the Society in the coming weeks to see if a transfer of ownership will be beneficial to the Town.

A special election took place on September 12 at Precinct One; the Town Hall. It included two ballot questions concerning funding to purchase two items for the DPW. Both passed with results as follows: question one pertaining to heavy-duty lift system 61 yes; 43 no. And question 2 to purchase a Vibratory Roller and Trailer with Dust Control 65 yes; 39 no.

Flue Clinic
Gary Winitizer
The annual Seasonal Flu Vaccination Clinic is scheduled for Wednesday, October 11th, from 10 AM to 11:30 AM at the Town Hall, 13 On The Common. The clinic, sponsored by the Royalston Council on Aging, is free of charge and is for Royalston residents who are 18 years of age or older. The vaccination is free. Health insurance is not required. If you have insurance, please bring your card. This year’s flu vaccines have been updated for this season. Pneumonia vaccines, Prevnar 13 (PCV13) and Pneumovax 23 (PPSV23), will also be available, and Fluzone® High-Dose vaccine for those over 65.

This year’s clinic will be conducted in the Assembly Hall (second floor) at the Town Hall. Participants will enter through the rear door and be pre-screened. After successful screening, participants will go to second floor by stairs or elevator, and then complete paperwork. Next, vaccine will be administered. Then you can enjoy a snack or proceed to join us for lunch in first floor dining room.

Forms can be downloaded from Royalston’s website: www.Royalston-ma.gov. Vaccines will be provided by Athol Pharmacy, 290 Main Street in Athol. Assistance will be provided by Royalston Board of Health and nurses from the Wachusett Medical Reserve Corps.

To join us for the Wednesday meal (Cheese Lasagna with meatballs, zucchini & cauliflower, dinner roll with tropical fruit for dessert), please call Betty at 978-249-9656 or Gary at 978-249-8957 before 5 PM on Monday.

Royalston Emergency Management Agency
Director Jim Barclay ema@royalston-ma.gov or phone 978-249-2904
Deputy Director Tom Musco tpmusco@gmail.com or phone 978-249-9633

There are many aspects of emergency preparedness, and a great many areas of overlap between Emergency Management and other town departments and organizations. “Emergency Support Functions” include responsibilities for fire and rescue, public works, and public health. Every action each resident takes to be prepared makes life a little easier for ALL residents... especially for those who serve our community on the various agencies EMA overlaps!

This month, for example, Royalston’s Council on Aging will, with Royalston’s Board of Health, be offering the Town’s annual flu immunization clinic on Wednesday, October 11th. It takes place prior to the Luncheon Club’s noon meal (10 – 11:30 a.m.) and is free of charge to all Royalston residents 18+, with or without insurance. The less spread of any respiratory infection, the better... and translates directly into fewer rescue runs, fewer hospitalizations, and fewer absences from work and school.

October is also Fire Prevention Month. Chief Eric Jack and his Fire and EMS personnel have already visited the Royalston Community School to ensure children are familiar with emergency procedures like bus and building evacuations, fire drills, and so forth. They will return this month to provide a more comprehensive program for the students. It is helpful when families support these visits by helping children develop E.D.I.T.H. (Exit Drills In The Home) plans, and reinforce behaviors like turning pot handles towards the center of the range top, and keeping all exits unobstructed. Representatives will present a program on Fire Safety for the October Ladies’ Benevolent Society meeting at 7 p.m. on the last Thursday.

As we approach some of the DPW’s most challenging conditions of the year – snow and ice – there are a number of actions residents can take to make their job a little less stressful. Ensuring your vehicles are winter ready is the first task. Keep your fuel and especially windshield washer fluid tanks filled, and ensure your tires are suitable for snow and ice. A little extra weight in trunks and pick-up beds can help a vehicle negotiate the roads. A properly prepared vehicle is less likely to get stuck and block a roadway. The real biggie is to keep driveway snow out of the roadways! Driveway snow that either causes embankments to bulge out into the travel lanes, or ridges across roads from pushing snow to roadside opposite the driveway must be removed. It takes a lot of time in terms of both equipment and manpower to reclaim roadways lost to improper (and often illegal) driveway plowing.

Every single action taken towards preparedness helps. It can save us all some inconvenience and aggravation. It can save limited time and money. Being prepared can even save lives. Be sure to do your part for your family, your friends and neighbors, and our community’s public servants.

Preparedness beats panic every time!
Be informed ~ Make a Plan!
Board of Health News
Phil Leger, chair
The Royalston COA and BOH are sponsoring a flu vaccine clinic at the Town Hall October 11th 10-noon. Senior flu vaccine, hopefully the new COVID-19 vaccine, and pneumonia vaccine will be available.

Fall is upon us and at some point frost will hit. Until then, mosquitoes will still be active, so take precautions. Ticks however will still be with us through the frost.

Reminder for those of you that have not purchased your new annual transfer station sticker: it was due July 1st. See Tony to get with the program.

Speaking about the program, the Town of Winchendon has put out feelers about area towns regionalizing their transfer station. No discussions have been held at this time. If a proposal is made, we will have a public hearing to discuss advantages and disadvantages. Pros: open more days and hours; it’s only a mile from Royalston border on River Road and economy of scale benefits. Cons: distance further for some folks in town; no direct control but a voice in operations. At this point, no need to panic as there has not been any official discussion.

Royalston Cultural Council
Contact: James Taylor jim.taylor@mass.gov 978-575-1551
Applications are now open for Royalston Cultural Council grants. Royalston has received a $5,500 allocation from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, and will be reviewing all applications received before the October 17th deadline. Applications are completed online at https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/local-cultural-council-program/application-process/.

Royalston Agricultural Committee
Chair: Jennifer Janowicz 508-723-2729
The Second Annual Fall Fair, organized by the Town’s Agricultural Commission, is scheduled for Saturday, October 21st, and will offer a wide array of family friendly activities from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the Royalston Common.

See farm and domestic animals, a tractor display, enjoy hayrides and games, and visit concession stands for food and drink before stopping to listen to live music by Ryan Hood. Kate Collins and her Border Collies will demonstrate shepherding. The First Congregational Church will be manning a bake sale and snack bar. Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library are also participating, as well as a number of vendors expected to be on hand for the day. Royalston’s Fire & EMS Association is holding a chicken barbecue, beginning at 3. The Historical Society’s Living History Tour starts at 7 pm at Riverside Cemetery in South Royalston.

There are a limited number of spaces available for anyone wishing to occupy a vendor slot – agricultural products and services, arts and crafts, flea market tables - all are welcomed! Spaces are free, but reservations in advance are required. Contact Jen at 508-723-2729.

Royalston Department of Public Works
DPW Superintendent Jaret R. Thiem 978-249-4223 or dpwadmin@royalston-ma.gov
Superintendent Jaret R. Thiem is bragging a bit about his “great DPW crew,” which has invested time, talent, and energy into re-purposing an old dump truck body from one of the Department’s six-wheeled dump trucks. Completely rotted and rusted out, the DPW staff cut apart the old body, welded, and fabricated a flat bed. There are still a few more hydraulic lines to run, and then a paint job, but this vehicle will be in service for use this winter, and for somewhere in the neighborhood of $10,000. To put that amount in perspective, in terms of dollars, a new body would have cost around $70,000. A new truck would cost somewhere on the order of $320,000! Thanks to the Royalston DPW, the Town of Royalston now has a truck that will “give the Town many more good years of service” for a relatively modest financial investment.

Superintendent Thiem invites questions and concerns (and hopefully a few compliments) but requests they be e-mailed to dpw@royalston-ma.gov so he can properly track them. As always, call the DPW during business hours for any urgent needs, and in an emergency, dial 9-1-1.

Whitney Hall Marketing Feasibility Study
Public Meeting, November 2 - Presentation and Discussion of Preliminary Findings and Recommendations
Keen Independent Research, a national market and economic research firm, has been conducting a marketing feasibility study of Whitney Hall. The study team has gathered and analyzed public input about community needs and wishes, engaged Trahan Architects to assess the condition of the historic 1905 building, and evaluated the financial feasibility of transforming this iconic, but underutilized, South Royalston village site into a fully functioning, vibrant community asset.

Join Keen Independent and Royalston’s Whitney Hall Project Team to hear and discuss preliminary findings and recommendations at an upcoming public meeting.

Location: Upstairs at the Town Hall, 13 On the Common, Royalston
Date: Thursday, November 2, 2023
Time: 6:30 to 8:00 pm.

Town Clerk News
Town Clerk Barbara Richardson 978-249-0493
Hours: Wednesdays 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; by appt.
In anticipation of upcoming primaries and presidential elections in 2023/2024, Town Clerk Barbara Richardson is updating the current voter list. If you have not voted in the past three years, and have not returned an annual census form, you are considered an “Inactive Voter,” and will be removed from the Active Voter List. If you are not on the current voter list, before you can vote, you will have to sign a form attesting to your continuous residency, which delays the final count if done on voting day, as the attestation must be researched and validated before ballots of inactive voters may be processed. If you have any question about your status as a voter, or if you wish to register to vote to cast ballots in any upcoming town, state, or federal elections, contact the Town Clerk to verify your current status or register.
**Phinehas S. Newton Library News**

Kathy Morris, Library Director

Trustees: Jeffrey Mangum, Jennifer Basso, Theresa Quinn

Mondays 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Thursdays 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. and 6:30 - 8 p.m.; Saturdays: 9:00 am-12 noon

978-249-3572  www.royalstonlibrary.org

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**Donations to the Friends**

- Deane Marchbein
- Elizabeth and Clarence Rabideau
- Cindy Savoy
- David and Christine Cheney
- Marguerite LaCroix
- Virginia Gingras
- Catherine Offutt
- Christine Long
- Walter Thorton and Nanji Davison

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**Thank you**

**David and Christine Cheney** for their generous donation to replace our older canopy after the wind and rain storm did a number on its frame.

**Matt and Nancy Hickler** for initiating the contacts with the UMass Herbarium botanists and for their interest in the collection and for driving and navigating the UMass campus on the first day of classes to make our way to the lab.

**Maureen Blasco** for hours of work trying to get the new USPS mailing permit.

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**Art Exhibit**

Gordon Morrison’s amazing botanical paintings will be on display through October. While centered on plants from four different habitats, they are filled with all sorts of other lifeforms. Each time you look, you notice something else. There are also guides to identify all the plants in each one.

If you are interested in having a display of your artwork, contact the Library. We are always looking for new artists (or people who haven’t had an exhibit in a while) to mount a show.

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**Royalston Herbarium Update**

**Kathy Morris**

Recently Matt and Nancy Hickler and I traveled to UMass Amherst to visit the laboratory of Roberta Lombardi, Collections Manager, and Tristram Seidler, Curator of the Herbarium, where our specimens were stored in their freezers. They were enthusiastic about us proceeding with the documentation of the collection and suggested a few alternative approaches. I also contacted Patrick Sweeney, Peabody Museum as Collections Manager in the Division of Botany at Yale University and curator of the Consortium of Northeastern Herbaria. After communicating with him, it was decided that the collection remain housed (in better conditions) in the Library, digitized (probably at UMass), and then added both to the Consortium of Northeastern Herbaria and Digital Commonwealth. The Library herbarium was collected by renowned botanist and South Royalston Congregational Church pastor, James A. Bates. This is his latest known collection dating primarily from 1813-1814, four years before his death. He is buried in Riverside Cemetery.

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**Celebrate the Freedom to Read**

Join us at the Library on Thursday October 5 from 6:30 until 8:00 p.m. for a “Read-in” to celebrate the freedom to read during Banned Books Week, which runs from September 30 through October 7. Read from any of the Library’s materials and enjoy some refreshments too. All are welcome to attend.

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**Craft Program**

Join us at the Town Hall on Sunday, November 5 at 2pm to decorate a festive wooden sign for your holiday gatherings. Two different signs to choose from. Limited to the first 20 people to register. Register by calling the Library at 978-249-3572. Free. For teens and adults. Sponsored by the Friends.

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**Library Book Group**

The Library Book Group meets the third Thursday of the month except December at 3:30 p.m. This month’s meeting on October 20 will discuss *Midwives* by Chris Bohjalian. Copies of the book are available at the Library. On November 16 the book will be *Leaving Time* by Jodi Picoult.
Some of the new materials at your library

Adult Fiction
Armas, Elena  The Long Game
Atkinson, Kate  Normal Rules Don’t Apply
Bachelder, Chris  Dayswork
Brown, Graham  Clive Cussler’s Condor Fury
Cleves, Ann  The Raging Storm
Donoghue, Emma  Learned By Heart
Feeney, Alice  Good Bad Girl
Fleming, Candace  Mine!
Groff, Lauren  The Vaster Wilds
Jiles, Paulette  Chenerville
Johnson, Craig  The Longmire Defense
Jonasson, Ragnar  Reykjavik
Kakimoto, Megan  Every Drop is a Man’s Nightmare
Kim, Angie  Happiness Falls
King, Stephen  Holly
Krueger, William  The River We Remember
Littlewood, Fran  Amazing Grace Adams
Lynch, Lindsay  Do Tell
Miles, Kyle  Code Red
Palahniuk, Chuck  Not Forever, but for Now
Patterson, James  Lion & Lamb
Preston, Douglas  Dead Mountain
Rum, Etaf  Evil Eye
Slaughter, Karin  After that Night
Smirnoff, Karin  The Girl in the Eagle’s Talons
Smith, Zadie  The Fraud
Weiner, Jennifer  The Breakaway

Adult Non-fiction
Brooks, Arthur  Build the Life You Want
Funder, Anna  Wifedom
Hornocker, Maurice  Cougars on the Cliff
Isaacson, Walter  Elon Musk
Lepore, Jill  The Deadline
Pearson, Carrie  Virginia Wouldn’t Slow Down!
Reese, Anney  Stuff Mom Never Told Me

DVDs:
Air, Blackberry, Book Club: Next Chapter, City on a Hill Season 2 Fast X, Hotel Transylvania: Transformania, Kandahar, and Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse (DVD & Blu-ray)

Book Review
from Kathy Chencharik
I Never Called Him Pa
by Diane Kane
If you like historical fiction and coming-of-age stories, this is the book for you. Take a step back away from all the hustle and bustle of social media. Follow Henry, a young boy who lives on a farm in Mendota, Illinois with his grandmother. Between the years of 1948 and 1968, Henry tells us his story. It’s about a hobo named Ernest who rode the rails and came to stay for health reasons. It’s about farm life, friends, love, laughter and sometimes tears.

Children’s Fiction
Barnett, Mac  How Does Santa Get Down the Chimney?
Brumm, Joe  Sleepytime
Burgess, Matthew  Sylvester’s Letter
Dewdney, Anna  Llama Llama’s Little Lie
Fleming, Candace  Mine!
Genhart, Michael  Spanish is the Language of my Family
Griffiths, Andy  The 156-Story Treehouse
Heim, Alastair  Dr. Seuss’s How the Grinch Stole Christmas
Ho, Richard  Two New Years
Hoefler, Kate  In the Dark
Kurilla, Renee  Vamos! Let’s Go Read
Raul  Stuntboy, In-between Time
Reynolds, Jason  Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Sleigh!
Willems, Mo  Interrupting Cow and the Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing

Children’s Nonfiction
Ball, Georgia  Guinness World Records 2024
Blabey, Aaron  I Survived the American Revolution, 1776
Day, Nick  Cat on the Run in Cat of Death!
Debbink, Andrea  The Mona Lisa Vanishes
Fleming, Candace  mine!
Genhart, Michael  Spanish is the Language of my Family
Griffiths, Andy  The 156-Story Treehouse
Heim, Alastair  Dr. Seuss’s How the Grinch Stole Christmas

Young Adult
Eggers, Dave  The Eyes & the Impossible

Yoga with Jess
Give yourself some self-care on Tuesday evenings from 6 until 7. Jess Schanz leads participants through poses that will increase core strength, flexibility, and stamina. All levels are welcome. Bring your own mat. Funded by the Friends of the Library.

Preschool Story Time
Join Brooke Coleman on non-holiday Mondays at 2:00 p.m. at preschool story time. There are stories, themed crafts, play time, and healthy snacks as well as a chance to meet other caregivers and preschool children. All are welcome and there is no registration necessary.

Hotspots Available to Borrow
Going on a trip? Got lousy internet? Need to have unlimited data? Borrow one of the T-Mobile hotspots from the Library. Wherever there is T-Mobile service, the hotspot should work.
Royalston Fish and Game Club
Clubhouse phone: 978-249-3004.

Trap Shooting for all skill levels continues on Wednesdays, at 5 p.m. through November 1st. Non-members are welcome to join in for $4/round (25 clays.) Trap shooting is weather permitting – please contact Don at 978-430-7822 if the weather is questionable. (Be advised, there is no cell coverage at the Club!)

Roast Beef Dinners Nov. 4th and Dec. 9th are planned. These family-style meals feature tossed salad, bread with real butter, perfectly cooked roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, and a strawberry or chocolate Hoodie cup for dessert. Take-out dinners are available. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and supper is served about 6 p.m. Call or stop by the Clubhouse at 978-249-3004. Tickets are $15/person; NO tickets will be available at the door!

The Royalston F&G will serve as an official Deer Check Station this season, opening the Monday following Thanksgiving, Nov. 27th. The Club is also going to offer breakfast for hunters; specifics will be in the November newsletter.

Mount Grace Land Trust Community Hike
Clare Green of Warwick and Allen Young of Royalston, longtime members of both the Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, the North Quabbin Trails Assn., and the Athol Bird and Nature Club, are co-leading an autumn hike, in association with these organizations, on Sunday, Oct. 15, starting at 1 p.m., in the Winchendon Community Park, 88 Ingleside Road, Winchendon, Mass. In case of hard rainfall, the hike will take place the following Sunday, Oct. 22, same time. The family friendly free hike is easy, featuring peaceful water views and a forested landscape, and will take approximately one and one-half hours. No dogs, please. Pre-registration is required by calling Clare at 978-544-7421 or Allen at 978-249-7612. (Leave a message if there is no answer.) Limited to 25 people. For GPS, enter 88 Ingleside Road, Winchendon, which is off Maple Street (Route 202), just north of the Winchendon business district. There is an ample parking area as well as port-a-potties adjacent to a pleasant picnic area where Clare and Allen will arrive at noon to welcome those who wish to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy BEFORE the hike.

Royalston Fire and EMS News

RF&EMS Fundraising chairperson Amy M. Putney, FF/FR
Royalston Fire & EMS Association is holding a Chicken BBQ October 21st, 3 p.m. in conjunction with the Fall Fair and the Historical Society’s Living History Cemetery Tours. The meal will be held at Station #1, just off The Common on Athol Road. Tickets are $20/adults and $12/kids under 12.

Mark your calendar: Turkey Raffle Nov. 10th! Spins begin at 7 p.m. sharp in the Center Fire Station. Twenty-four rounds with one small turkey, one large turkey, and an array of fall foods and beverages, for $2/ticket. Tickets will soon be available for the basket raffle, which contains everything needed for a complete Thanksgiving meal. Those tickets are $2/each, and will be available in advance from any Fire & EMS member, as well as during the Turkey Raffle. Your support provides additional training and the purchase of new equipment that allows the Department to better serve the Town... WITHOUT costing extra tax dollars.

Who are the People in your Neighborhood?... Buried in your Neighborhood. ...

The Royalston Historical Society presents:

Candlelight Living-History Tours of Riverside Cemetery South Royalston

Meet at the Cemetery Gates on River Road

Saturday, October 21 at 7 - 8 pm
(Tours leave approx every 20 min.)

A little spooky, but Not a “haunted cemetery”... Instead, visitors will encounter the lives behind the headstones. Family friendly.

Dress for the weather.

Hot drinks and refreshments served.

Free, but donations to support the Society’s archiving and museum updates appreciated.

While we expect it to be chilly, if the weather is terribly rainy, the event may be postponed. Check the Society’s Facebook page for weather updates.
**CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD NEWS**

Got something to crow about? Send it along to the RCN at chasegos2@gmail.com or drop at library.

Kudos to Caitlin (Barclay) Renzaglia who, last month, participated in the 7th annual Salt River (Arizona) Firefighters 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb in memory of the 343 firefighters who died in NYC’s Twin Towers on 9/11/2001, and in honor of her childhood home’s firefighters. She climbed 111 flights of stairs in 110F. degree heat, sporting a Royalston Fire & EMS tee (thanks to Chief Eric Jack!) Caitlin earned $824.50, with distinction as the ninth highest individual fundraiser. More than $117,000 was raised for the National Fallen Firefighters’ Association, which supports families of fallen firefighters, and the FDNY Counseling Services Unit.

**Interested in Town History?**
The Royalston Historical Society has printed copies of the Town map of 1831 showing all of the roads, home owner names and place names. Suitable for framing, this map makes a great gift. $10.

**The sun got up later**
The sun got up later,
Yawned and stretched
Golden arms out
Across the countryside
Embracing hayfields,
Sporting second-cut bales.
Gardens revealed a glut
Of gorgeous tomatoes,
Pendulously hiding under
Undulating vines.
Sunflowers bow humble heads
In the presence of
Grandfather
Sun.
Trees shed preliminary leaves,
Dropped dry,
Not yet colorful.
The season stands tiptoe,
Precariously balancing
Between summer and fall,
Ready to take
The next step.
*Michael Young, Royalston Poet Laureate*

**Obituary**

Elvia Cyrene (Robertson) Richards

It is with great sadness our family announces the peaceful passing of "Evie" on September 21, at home. Born to Cyrene and Arthur Robertson on the family farm in East Royalty, Prince Edward Island, Canada. Mom was the last surviving Robertson sibling following the passing of her beloved sister, Ada Champion, in 2019. She was fiercely proud of her Island roots and cherished spending summers in Canoe Cove with her family and dear friends. She loved to share many wonderful and happy childhood memories that she made with her siblings and loving parents growing up on the farm.

Along with her parents, Evie is predeceased by her husband of nearly 64 years, Donald F. Richards, sons Kent, brothers Arthur (Jean) Robertson, Wilfred (Mae) Robertson, David (Evelyn & Reta) Robertson and sister, Ada (Keith) Champion. She is also predeceased by nephews Lewis, Fergus and Arthur Robertson and niece, Victoria MacKinnon. It gives us a sense of peace to imagine the joy and celebration as Mom joins them all again. She will be dearly missed by son David, daughters Diane (Richard) Stauder and Carol "Robbie" (John) Currie and her beloved grandchildren, Sarah (Eric) Swennes, Elizabeth Currie, Peter Currie, Leanna (Joshua) Hamlin, Christopher Stauder, Marie Stauder and Luke (Linda) Stauder, great-grandchildren Zachary, Zoey, Noah, Grayson and Leslie, and her treasured nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews. Mom was anxiously awaiting the arrival of her newest great-grandchild, "baby Swennes", in October.

Sincere thanks for the exceptional care Mom received from the staff, nurses and doctors of North Quabbin Family Physicians. Our heartfelt thanks to Life-Path, Catholic Charities, Care Central VNA & Hospice, especially nurses Joi and Taylor and Dr. John Harrington, and also Home Health Aids Kim, Carolina and Sarka. Thanks also to the members of the Royalston Fire & EMS for the many kindnesses shown to Mom. We will forever be grateful for the love, kindness, guidance and compassionate care given Mom by her incredible caregivers Bea, Colleen, Doreen, Eva and Kelley. In place of flowers, our family would appreciate donations in Mom's honor to Care Central VNA & Hospice, https://www.carecentralvnahospice.org/about/donate, the Town of Royalston Fire & EMS, or the First Congregational Church of Athol (Peace Garden).

**Royalston South Village Revitalization News**

Peter Gagliardi and the SOS Subcommittee have this report: The Save Our Store effort has been stalled due to a variety of reasons beyond our control. In early September, the property was listed for sale. The asking price is $229,900. We understand that the owners wish to sell before winter, which would not be possible for the SOS group.

What a perfect day we had for the Awesome Autumn Music Fest at the Gazebo co-sponsored by RSVR and the Royalston Cultural Council! We would like to thank Jim Bennett for organizing the musical entertainment: Just Rita and her All Star Band. Appreciation goes to Jaret Thiem and his team at the DPW for the continued lawn maintenance around the Gazebo and South Village areas. Thank you to Josh Doub and Lydia Musco, who assisted with electrical needs and general set up of event tables to ensure exit of fire apparatus if needed. Officer Joshua Lamarche ensured safety with the traffic detail. Special thanks to Kevin and Brady Killay for putting up the weathervane before the event. We would also like to thank the following people: Rose Lawrence for chairing the event with Nancy Monette; Julie Crosby of Julie Balloonie for balloon creations, Rachel Killay for face painting, Loryn Killay for the event poster. Also Rose donated raffle table items, Nancy Monette and Linda Alger donated food and Linda Alger, Nancy Skowronsik, Janice Trask, Kelly Dolan and Ruth Suyenaga assisted at the food, basket and raffle tables. A special thank you goes to Mrs. Jeanne DeBruin for her generous contribution to the event. The Cultural Council had hula hoops available for the kids and Rose had bubble wands. Thank you to all of the “behind the scenes” individuals. Rose sends a shout out to Maureen Blasco for the beautiful yellow flowers surrounding the Gazebo and the gorgeous and colorful flowers surrounding the yellow flower box by the Fire Station. Thanks to Maureen and Patti Stanko for the watering and care of the flowers by the Fire Station, picnic area and bridge all summer.

Along with her parents, Evie is predeceased by her husband of nearly 64 years, Donald F. Richards, sons Kent, brothers Arthur (Jean) Robertson, Wilfred (Mae) Robertson, David (Evelyn & Reta) Robertson and sister, Ada (Keith) Champion. She is also predeceased by nephews Lewis, Fergus and Arthur Robertson and niece, Victoria MacKinnon. It gives us a sense of peace to imagine the joy and celebration as Mom joins them all again. She will be dearly missed by son David, daughters Diane (Richard) Stauder and Carol "Robbie" (John) Currie and her beloved grandchildren, Sarah (Eric) Swennes, Elizabeth Currie, Peter Currie, Leanna (Joshua) Hamlin, Christopher Stauder, Marie Stauder and Luke (Linda) Stauder, great-grandchildren Zachary, Zoey, Noah, Grayson and Leslie, and her treasured nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews. Mom was anxiously awaiting the arrival of her newest great-grandchild, "baby Swennes", in October.

Sincere thanks for the exceptional care Mom received from the staff, nurses and doctors of North Quabbin Family Physicians. Our heartfelt thanks to Life-Path, Catholic Charities, Care Central VNA & Hospice, especially nurses Joi and Taylor and Dr. John Harrington, and also Home Health Aids Kim, Carolina and Sarka. Thanks also to the members of the Royalston Fire & EMS for the many kindnesses shown to Mom. We will forever be grateful for the love, kindness, guidance and compassionate care given Mom by her incredible caregivers Bea, Colleen, Doreen, Eva and Kelley. In place of flowers, our family would appreciate donations in Mom's honor to Care Central VNA & Hospice, https://www.carecentralvnahospice.org/about/donate, the Town of Royalston Fire & EMS, or the First Congregational Church of Athol (Peace Garden).

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ARRSD Updates
submitted by Superintendent Ehrenworth:

All Athol-Royalston Regional School District (ARRSD) students and their families are invited to ARRSD’s Community Night Out on Thursday, October 19th, from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at the Athol High School track. The event will feature a bonfire, music, and while supplies last, free food: Hot dog, chips, s’mores, popcorn, and water. District clubs, teams, staff, and local community groups will put on an exhibit of “decked out cars” for all to see. Questions? 978-249-2436 ext. 312.

Superintendent Ehrenworth has announced that ARRSD is implementing an Instructional Focus Plan (IFP) intended to support all learners in all content areas and all grades to read with proficiency and to think critically. Every ARRSD classroom will have as its focus five evidence-based literacy practices which are grounded in research and have been proven effective through empirical studies. Recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), these practices are (1) daily word work, or how words are formed and how we attach meaning to words; (2) daily work with complex texts, which involves more rigorous literature and opportunities for deep comprehension through explicitly teaching connected and foundational concepts, using read-alouds and stepping stones to reach higher-order thinking ideas; (3) working with content-specific vocabulary necessary to understand ideas and concepts related to a topic; (4) offering student-relevant texts that enable students to see, connect, and explore their own identities, traditions, cultures, and interests through literacy experiences; and (5) daily writing opportunities to build strong critical thinkers with effective communication skills. With these strategic tools, our students will be engaged and competent learners and productive citizens in our schools and communities.

ARRSD has its very own Family & Community Center and a full-size Community Food Pantry. We offer a variety of services to help our families, from translation and interpretation support, support for students to obtain their permit/driver’s license/ MA State ID Fees, referrals to local community agencies for financial resources, health insurance navigation, heating assistance, navigate school support, as well as exciting opportunities for families to come together for learning. The Community Food Pantry offers local produce as well as staples. It was used by 379 households in August 2023. Located on the lower level of Athol High School RM#112, the pantry is easiest to access if you park in the back on the Lake Ellis side of the school. Support staff are bilingual with English and Spanish. ARRSD Food Pantry Hours are: Wednesdays 3-5 p.m. Questions? Call Cora or Natasha 978-249-2436 ext. 312.

The Athol-Royalston Middle School (ARMS) is looking for adult volunteers interested in contributing towards the growth and development of that school. Those interested in discussing topics such as the School Improvement Plan, and how the school is fostering an inclusive, safe, and fun environment are invited to check out the ARMS School Council, which meets monthly during the school year. Contact the main office for details: 978-249-2430.

Athol High (AHS) is pursuing ways to increase student participation in higher level courses, aimed at promoting the notion that all students can achieve academic success at the college level. This year, beyond the launching of our Early College program, AHS introduced AP English 10 Seminar. This Seminar engages 10th grade students in cross-curricular conversations exploring the complexities of academic and real-world topics and issues by analyzing divergent perspectives. Using an inquiry framework, students practice reading and analyzing articles, research studies, and foundational, literary, and philosophical texts; listening to and viewing speeches, broadcasts, and personal accounts; and experiencing artistic works and performances. The interest for this higher-level course was met with great demand, as 40% of the class of 2026 students have opted to enroll, which increased the overall sophomore class participation in AP courses from 15% in 2022-23 to 50% this school year. Additionally, each year the Department of Education (DOE) tracks the percentage of students in each school’s junior and senior classes for their overall participation in advanced level courses. A growing number of students indicated interest: 63.5% in 2022-23 to nearly 70% this school year. We look forward to highlighting the happenings and experiences of our AHS students enrolled in our Early College partnerships with MWCC, and Fitchburg State University.

Many more details about the goings-on in Athol and Royalston’s schools are available on the recently redone website, www.arrsd.org

Thank you to these consistant supporters of the newsletter:

- Days Gone By Antiques - Bob and Lorraine Casinghino
- Paul Montero - Professional Land Surveyor
- Sam’s Canine Companions - Sherry A. Miner
- Mark O’Connor - Excavation/Contracting
- Luna Body Therapeutics - Carolyn Cullen
- Renovations R Us - Bob LeBlanc
- The Kitchen Garden
- Red Apple Farm

Fall into 01368!

As we approach holiday season, please remember that your purchases of postage at the Royalston Post Office help us keep 01368 as our zip code! “Postmistress Janice” offers many options for stamps, and will soon be receiving holiday specials. Our Post Office is open Monday through Saturday, 7:45-11:45 a.m. Our Post Office is financially supported through sales of stamps and services.
What is Happening at the Village School?
*Rise Richardson, director*

It’s outdoor time! Classes eat lunch and snack outdoors at the picnic tables and the fire circle. Science classes are outdoors. Classes are hiking Camp Caravan trails and doing tree and habitat studies in the woods. Reading Buddies are building fairy houses together along the trail to the pond. The whole school is going on a mushroom hunt. Our resident chickens wander the playground in search of bugs and other treats and greet the children at recess. Check out www.villageschoolma.org for the latest newsletter and happenings.

Upcoming events
Thursday October 5 Kindergarten Reading Morning 8:30 to 9:30. Thinking of sending your child to the Village School? Come in for a hands-on presentation on our engaging Kindergarten Reading and Writing Curriculum. It's the start of children becoming lifelong readers.

Saturday November 18 Open House 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Come meet the teachers, talk with parents, meet alumni, tour the building, find out about our unique curriculum and get your questions answered! Bring your children, they will enjoy activities in the classrooms just for them. Preschool starts filling up for next year.

Dean's Beans Coffee Order You can order fresh roasted ground or whole bean coffee once a month through the Village School. Order online and pick it up in the hallway at the school the following Friday. Go to https://www.villageschoolma.org/shop/ for coffee order due dates and to put in your order.

Royalston Community School PTG
PTGroyalstoncommunityschool@gmail.com

The Royalston Community School Parent-Teacher Group is up and running for the 2023-2024 School Year! President Joslyn May and officers Nadine Hopkins, Vice President; Gina Maroni, Treasurer; Dayna Mallet, Secretary and Sarah Deblois, Volunteer Coordinator have already hosted school opening events, and are working on plans for fun and fundraising activities for the coming year. Meetings are via Zoom, the first Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. The link will be included in the principal’s letter, as well as an e-mail from the PTG to families who have requested information regarding attendance at meetings. The Royalston Community School PTG maintains a Facebook page under that name.

First and Second Congregational Church - Marion's Food Pantry:
New Day and Hours
We know times are tough. Anybody in need — please come visit the pantry, or we can deliver if home-bound during pantry hours, Wednesdays 2 - 4 p.m. Contacts- Deb Conrad (978) 895-3505, Jeff & Sue Smith (978) 895-7887.

Monty Tech
*Sara Dilg at 978-248-9828, Royalston Rep. s-dilg@montytech.net ~ 978-248-9828*

The new school year is underway with incoming freshmen having undergone a Freshman Orientation, and 250 of their family members having attended a parent orientation. This year a barbeque preceded the parent orientation.

The positive financial news continues. Monty Tech has been awarded a $720,000 CTI (Career Technical Initiative) Grant from the Commonwealth Corporation. This is the fourth such grant the district has received, and the largest to date. Funds will go toward reducing obstacles to workforce training for unemployed and underemployed adults. Students will have access to training in Carpentry, Plumbing, and HVAC, and will be provided with access to childcare during school hours.

For high school-aged students, the school has invested in campus improvements, specifically to the Early Childhood classroom and one of the Science labs. Furthermore, Monty Tech will work on expanding its offerings to include more Industry Recognized Credentials (IRCs) that students can work to obtain. Currently, the school appropriates more than $100,000 to fund nearly two thousand individual IRCs.

Lastly, as mentioned last month, Monty Tech has made changes to its Admissions Policy to limit bias and, to the extent possible, level the playing field for all applicants. Like nearly all other vocational technical high schools in the state, Monty Tech uses a points-based ranking system to evaluate applicants. The following changes to this system have been approved:

*Recommendations.* The requirement for a sending school recommendation has been dropped. The concern was that, among the 40 or so sending schools across 18 communities, there were consistently wide discrepancies in the scores that the guidance counselors gave to the students they were sending.

*Interviews.* To make up for the reduction in the number of points lost from the school recommendation, additional questions have been added to the student interview; therefore, the interview itself is worth more points.

*Late applicants.* Late application packages are no longer considered alongside on-time application packages. All late application packages are moved to the bottom of the waiting list, in order of the date on which they were submitted.

*Attendance.* Monty Tech has loosened its middle school attendance record standards by increasing the number of absences a student is permitted for some tiers in its points hierarchy. That is, beginning in 2025, a student applicant will be able to have relatively more absences than students entering in previous years without being penalized in the attendance category. This change was made to address concerns that the attendance requirement might put lower income students at a disadvantage. Such students might be more likely to miss school to provide childcare for younger siblings.
Garden Notes  September 18, 2023

The observant among you might notice the early dateline above. Once again, I’m off to my annual retreat in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina, where I’ll renew acquaintances, search for the elusive mushroom (it is a mushroom conference after all), and drink inordinate amounts of wine. It is not the best of times to neglect the garden, but, fact is, there are no best times from the beginning of July to the end of October.

The beans, corn, and cucumbers are winding down; otherwise the garden remains pretty much as described last month. Harvest continues on a daily basis. We have experienced the first effects of the big wet. The leaves of the apple trees have died, probably a result of a fungus disease brought on by the rains. It is a strange sight: the trees are filled with fruit, and, decidedly, unfilled with leaves. Tomatoes, also, have suffered. Many cherry tomatoes have split (many have not). Just as well: consuming, preserving, peddling, and gifting will not make a dent. Tomato processing continues apace. They are brought to a boil, and, after a fashion, the pulp is separated from the skins and the seeds (there are any number of devices which perform this task). After six or so additional hours of simmering, fifteen pounds of tomatoes have been reduced to three and a half pints of puree. Pureeing tomatoes is not a get-rich-quick scheme.

The garden continues to provide surprises. Cauliflowers have never been larger. Carrots are an iffy crop for us. They take on shapes very un-carrot-like. This year, I dig one up and it looks like…….a carrot. Growing melons is a hit or miss proposition in Royalston. We’ve experienced a hit. The good news is that there are armloads of melons. The bad news is that there are armloads of melons. There is no reasonable way to preserve them. The literature suggests freezing. They freeze just fine; but their condition upon thawing is (way) less than fine.

The garden is feeding more than people. On a daily basis, our steer is provided with a bushel or so of assorted stuff. (If I’ve forgotten, he will remind me.) Brassica leaves, spent bean plants, rotting tomatoes, overgrown cucumbers and squash, onion peels, melon rinds, the tops of carrots and beets. The list goes on. We eat the kernels of the corn. The steer eats the cob, the husk, the leaves, and the stalk.

Before I next write, garlic will have been planted. This has always been a notable event, the onset, if you may, of the following year’s gardening season. It has gained in significance in recent years: it presupposes that I will be sufficiently sound of body and mind to tend to a garden yet again. At the cusp of eighty-one, it is hardly a given.

Larry Siegel

Flower-eater

My flower gardens suffered this summer. On an early morning in July, I ventured forth to find yesterday’s buds – lupin, coreopsis, daisy – neatly cropped. Even the Joe Pye Weed that always towered six feet tall by mid-summer had been shaved away. This had nothing to do with weather or lack of tending. My flowers were falling victim to someone with an appetite for tender greens.

Most of my flower beds are away from the house, on a rise near our field. So, I could understand the easy access they afforded a passing herbivore. But when I noticed that the bed next to our house had been clipped down, I got the feeling that our hungry visitor was passing closer than I’d thought.

Our neighbor said she’d seen a doe and her fawn in the woods between our homes in early spring. So, in mid-summer when the doe herself began to appear in our field, I was not surprised. As the days passed, she came closer and closer, until – sure enough – I saw her in the gardens. This was our flower-eater.

The doe became a frequent visitor. Often, I would open the front door and startled her into a swift getaway. Sometimes she was at the edge of our field. More often she was just a few yards away. But always she would flee, as if she knew she’d been caught on the wrong side of an invisible line.

The thought of her raising her fawn in our woods pleased me. I imagined them sheltering beneath mountain laurel on stormy days, and sleeping on soft pine needles at night. They were safe out there among the hemlocks and maples. That our yard – even my flowers – were sustaining mother and child seemed a natural extension of their world. I decided that this was not a summer for flowers.

One evening the fawn arrived on its own. It stepped cautiously into our yard, munching the grass, and keeping a watchful eye on its surroundings. It came so close to the house I might have opened the window and touched it. The soft brown coat with its sprinkling of white dots, the long thin legs, the flicking tail, the enormous ears – this was an enchanted creature. As it made its way through our yard I went from room to room, watching until it disappeared into the field. This was a cause for celebration! Our woods had provided the shelter needed for this fawn to survive and grow.

In late summer, after the rains had made our yard lush with greenery, the fawn returned. It was larger now, with fewer white spots and a body that seemed more in proportion to its long legs. But this time it was not alone. The doe that followed kept just enough distance to suggest that she had confidence in her offspring. Munching on leaf and vine, they were a stately pair, moving slowly through a yard that had become part of their world. In this summer without flowers, I had traded one kind of beauty for another. As I watched mother and child disappear into our woods, it seemed a fair trade.

Deb D’Amico
The Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Public Library invite you to:

**Join or renew your membership in the Friends of the Library.**

Not only a free **source of entertainment and information**, our Library is also an important **community center**. It is a place to get books, magazines, audio books, movies, and music both in hard copy and electronically. Computers and fast Internet access are freely available. Items such as a state parks pass, ice cream makers, folding tables, hot spots, a digital projector with screen can all be easily borrowed. Its **newsletter** keeps residents informed and connected and creates a continuous historical record of our lives.

The Friends of the Library is an active volunteer group, which supports our Library in these efforts. **New members and new ideas are always needed. Please contact the library to get involved.**

**Recent accomplishments of the Friends of the Library include:**

- Producing and mailing nearly 24 years of **the Royalston Community Newsletter**, sent without charge to every household in town.

- **Purchasing** patron favorites such as DVDs, CDs, and audiobooks as well as Wowbrary and maintaining a Little Free Library in the South Village.

- **Facilitating enrichment programs**, including local authors; basket-making, flower arranging, guache painting and cooking workshops; school vacation presentations with kite-flying, hawks and animals; the Summer Reading Programs for big kids and preschoolers, which featured room-sized whales, music, crazy hats and a homemade ice cream truck; The Royalston Shakespeare Company’s version of **The Tempest**, live music accompanying a silent film, a contra dance, and to top it off - weekly yoga.

- **Archiving** historical records stored at the library, including the history of the Ladies’ Benevolent Society

- **Fundraising**, including the famous plant sale and garden tour.

The Friends support this Newsletter and many other activities.

**Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Public Library**

**Membership and Contribution Form**

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Tax deductible. Make checks payable to:
Friends of the P. S. Newton Public Library, PO Box 133, Royalston MA 01368

**Your donations and ideas enable The Friends of the Library to continue to support the library director, Kathy Morris, and Board of Trustees in their important work. Thank you for your support.**
Recipe of the Month:
October is National Pasta Month. A Barclay family favorite (pretty much every month) is Baked Spaghetti, with a recipe that’s more a suggestion than the rule:

PIZZA BAKED SPAGHETTI
1 box long pasta (12 oz – 16 oz), cooked to just al dente
1 quart (or so) of sauce (jarred or homemade)
1 lb. of ground beef (chopped chicken; TVP crumbles; sausage…)
1 large onion, chopped
Minced garlic (a couple of cloves; tbsp. of jarred garlic)
8 oz cheese, grated (I use pizza cheese; a little mozzarella on top)
Pizza toppings of choice

Brown the ground beef with garlic and onion. Add in the sauce and heat. When the sauce is up to temperature, add in the pasta. Mix in about half of the cheese, then pour into a rectangle (9"x13") casserole dish. Level out the pasta mixture, then sprinkle the remaining cheese (or some mozzarella) on top. Add on the pizza toppings – red onion, mushroom and pepperoni are our favorites! Bake at 375F. until heated through and bubbly, and cheese begins to brown. Once cooled, it portions nicely, and can be refrigerated for several days. Microwave leftovers. Easily serves six to eight.

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Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Public Library
PO Box 133
Royalston MA 01368

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Preschool Storytime
at the Library
2 p.m. each Monday
Stories, socializing, songs, snacks and crafts
Free
Call the Library for more information